

# LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

THE LIVERPOOL SOCIETY

FOR PROMOTING

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,

ON

THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF HIGH PRICES  
OF PRODUCE,

AND

THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF LOW PRICES,

ON

*THE CONDITION OF SLAVES.*

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BY JAMES CROPPER.

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## A LETTER, &c.

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THOUGH the formation of our Society has been so recent as to render premature any detailed publication of the information obtained, yet when our investigations have established any particular points, no time ought to be lost in giving them to the public.

The first step towards the removal of an evil, is to prove its existence; our attention was therefore first turned to this part of the subject; but though we originated, we have not the merit of bringing before the public that able performance, "Negro Slavery, or a view of some of the more prominent features of that state of society, as "it exists in the United States of America, and "in the Colonies of the West Indies, especially "in Jamaica."

The next step was the remedy for those enormous evils which had been shown to exist, and

which, we are happy to state, presents no difficulty; for it is made clear by "A Letter to Jean Baptiste Say, on the comparative expense of Free and Slave Labour," that the cultivation by slaves is no less strongly marked by folly than by wickedness, and therefore can only now exist when aided by monopolies and bounties, and must cease in a competition with free labour.

The object of the present publication, is chiefly to bring forward some striking corroborations of the advantages of a competition of free labour, and of the beneficial effects of low prices, and the injurious effects of high prices on the condition of slaves.

Having, we trust, established these points on immovable grounds, it became of importance to make an appeal to the public in behalf of our cause; this appeal is now preparing, and will shortly go to press.

But the labours of the Society are not to end here; for we shall shortly be prepared to prove, that the efforts of the West India planters, to keep out the competition of the free cultivated sugar of the East Indies, can be of no avail to them, so long as they are dependant on the Continental markets for a sale of the surplus of their own; and that if the treatment of the slaves in the West Indies was not worse than in the United States, which, in "Negro Slavery," is shown to be bad enough, the produce of the islands would increase

at least as fast as the home consumption, at high prices, has done; and that high prices of sugar in Great Britain, independent of the rest of Europe, can only be established by the quantity being reduced below the consumption; and this can only be done by the destruction of the sugar, as the Dutch are said to have destroyed their spices, or by a continuance of the present horrid state of things, which destroys the lives of the cultivators.

The Society will next have to turn its attention to the extraordinary fact, of the land in America becoming barren under the cultivation of slaves, whilst it becomes more fertile under the hand of free men, and which exhaustion of soil is also complained of in the West India Colonies.—The friends of the cause, by thus continuing to expose, in all its native ugliness, a system alike destructive of the interests of the master and of the happiness of the slaves, and which seems to make barren the very land on which they toil, may hope to consign that system at no distant period to *universal and everlasting detestation*.

In reasoning on the co-operating causes which have produced the decline of slavery, we wish in no degree to detract from the effects of the genuine principles of Christianity, which we may hope are spreading with the diffusion of light and knowledge, and that benevolence and good feeling are increasingly active in endeavours to lessen the miseries and to promote the happiness of

man. If all were willing that these principles should be the rule of their conduct, they would of themselves be all-sufficient ; but we shall have occasion to trace the operation of another and a powerful principle, by which those who refuse to be governed by the mild dictates of Christianity, are compelled to yield to their own interest, and to the necessity of the case. He who has made it the interest of man to do right, has fixed a period to the gains of those who dare presume to debase his creatures, whom he has endued with mind and soul, to the level of the brutes. If it be admitted, that to degrade or debase any thing must deteriorate its value, then to sink a man to the level of a brute ; to cause that mind, which was intended to direct the actions of the body, to sink into nothing, or to be exerted in opposition to those actions, must be highly injurious to the interests of the master ; but bad as these systems are, the prices of produce may be kept high enough to support them. When those prices are reduced so low that the best systems only can be pursued, and slave cultivation is brought into fair competition with free labour, it will stand much the same chance as the old modes of spinning, or of manufacturing iron, or of drawing water from our mines, to oppose the modern improvements in machinery.

A state of slavery did exist in this country, and in many other parts of Europe, where it

now no longer exists ; and yet we see the same people, the same professing Christians, after having abolished slavery at home, proceed to re-establish it in the western world.

The abolition of the African slave-trade was general in the United States, as the act of particular States, prior to the year 1790 ; and was abolished by the general government as soon as by the constitution it had the power to do it, in 1808 ;\* but the State of South Carolina re-opened its ports a short time prior to that period. And in 1821, the same general government which in 1808 had interdicted the importation of slaves from Africa, opened a new market for the sale of those of its own states : so that after washing its hands from the stain of one side of this odious traffic in 1808, it again plunges them into both sides, that of seller as well as buyer, in 1821.

The emancipation of slaves commenced long since in the northern parts of the United States, and has been gradually extending southwards ; but has not reached those districts where either Cotton or Sugar is produced ; nor have any general emancipation laws been passed where Tobacco is extensively cultivated.

\* In the year 1791, the whole amount of the exports from Virginia and the States southward of it, was only about 56s for every slave ; but by the introduction of the cultivation of Cotton, the exports of South Carolina were, in 1807, equal to £12 10s for every slave.

The abolition of slavery in the South American republics has been preceded by a low rate of wages; in Baron Humboldt's travels we find the following remarks: "The price of labour is "cheaper here than in France. A freeman work-  
"ing as a day labourer, (peor,) is paid in the  
"valleys of Aragua and in the Llanos, four or  
"five piastras a month, not including food, which  
"is very cheap, on account of the abundance of  
"meat and vegetables."

From the island of Ceylon we are not fully informed of the value of slaves, or the rate of wages which preceded the abolition of slavery there; but from the following extract of a letter from Sir Alexander Johnston, it would appear that slaves were an object of exportation from the island; from which it may reasonably be inferred, that a low price of slaves, and consequently of wages, had prepared the people for this great measure; he says, "In 1813, several "persons in Ceylon were convicted under the act "of 1807, by a jury composed solely of Dutch "proprietors of slaves, of an attempt to *export* "free children as slaves from Ceylon."

Were we to consider all these meliorating changes as the effects of benevolent feeling and Christian principle, we should find many things irreconcilable with those views; whilst, if we admit the powerful co-operation of another principle, these difficulties will be removed. There

can be no doubt that a reduction in the price of labour, probably (as in many places at present,) to the lowest scale of subsistence, rendered slave labour unprofitable, and produced its abolition in many parts of Europe ; and that high prices of tropical productions, on the discovery of the western world, held out temptations to the introduction of slavery there. If history gives but little information as to the gradual and almost imperceptible decline of slavery in this and some other parts of Europe, there can be no doubt that a low value of labour was amongst the most powerful causes ; for it would be impossible to suppose that slavery could exist in this country, when we hear of propositions to send people away at parish or national expense, because their labour does not pay for their maintenance, or where parish relief is so often given in aid of inadequate wages. The emancipation of slaves in the northern parts of the United States, where the value of labour and produce was less than in the south, and where slave labour was constantly in competition with that of free men ; whilst on the other hand, emancipation has not been extensive where slave labour is profitable, shows that the efforts of benevolent men have been most successful when co-operating with natural causes. Though these causes must have aided those efforts, it is highly worthy of remark, that this has been effected whilst the value of labour was compara-

lively high, and we must therefore consider that an advanced state of knowledge, and the diffusion of Christian principles, have greatly contributed to hasten those measures in the United States. And let it never be forgotten, that whilst the advocates of negro slaves in this country have done next to nothing for their relief from the cruel bondage under which they are labouring in our Colonies in the West Indies, the unwearied exertions of the friends of manumission in the United States have probably effected the liberation of 100,000 of their fellow-beings in the last thirty years.

The seeming inconsistencies in the conduct of particular States, and of the general government of the United States, will be easily reconciled. There has been a constant increase in the slave population of the United States; and by the comparative rates of increase in the different States, it would appear that the sales of slaves from one state to another, must have been carried on to a considerable extent between the years 1790 and 1800, and continued nearly ever since. About that period, the cultivation of indigo, in South Carolina, had become less profitable, from the extension of its cultivation in the East Indies; and during this period, too, it is very probable that the surplus slaves of some of the States would fully supply the wants of others, quite as cheaply as they could be supplied from Africa.

During the continuance of these circumstances, good feelings and Christian principles would be exerted with success. But when the cultivation of cotton was introduced, and became very extensive and profitable in South Carolina, &c. the prices of slaves would necessarily advance, and the buyers had too strong an interest in the renewed importation from Africa, any longer to resist the temptation, and their ports were re-opened prior to 1808, when it was abolished by the general government. Are we then to suppose that benevolence and good feeling have made a retrograde movement in 1821? Or, is it not more reasonable to suppose, that in 1808 the general abolition of importation was carried by a mixture of motives; that a part of those who voted with the philanthropists in 1808, acted precisely on the same principles as the English farmers resist the importation of foreign corn, that it may not interfere with the sale of their own. Just on the same principles would these men vote for the opening of a new market for the sale of their slaves in the Missouri.

Whilst a low price of produce, and a reduced value of labour, seem to have contributed to and preceded the extinction of slavery in England and some other parts of Europe; in the northern parts of the United States, in the Island of Ceylon, and in the Spanish dominions in South America, it would be reasonably expected that

every step towards it would be marked by a gradual improvement in the condition of the slaves ; and we shall see, by the following facts, how these opinions are borne out.

In some instances, when, from the high prices of sugar and cotton, the attention of the planters had been exclusively directed to the production of those articles, and they had purchased the food required for their negroes, which was then given out by measure, when a fall in the prices of the articles cultivated, has induced the planters to grow their own corn, &c. the negroes are generally said to be more abundantly fed.

The state of the slaves who belong to small proprietors, both in America and the Brazils, will appear from the following extract from Koster's travels in the Brazils, and from answers to our queries sent out to America :

“ There are considerable numbers of white persons and of colour, who possess two or three slaves, and share with them even the daily labour of the field.” “ They are frequently considered as part of the family, and share with the master the food for which both are working. “ These slaves appear on gala days well dressed, and they have a certain air of independence, which shows that they think themselves to be something more in the world than mere drudges. “ The difference of the feeling of one of these men towards his master, and that of the gene-

" rality of slaves which are owned by great proprietors, is very striking. The former will not suffer, in his presence, a word to be spoken against his master; whilst the latter cares not if he hears every injurious epithet made use of. The slaves of small proprietors\* are not so liable to imbibe many of the faults to which those of wealthy men are subject, and they possess more pride,—a greater wish to act honourably,—a greater dread of being upbraided for a fault. Upon large estates, the assemblage of so many persons tends to depravation, and the wide distance which there is between the slave and the master, tends to produce a greater feeling of inferiority; but among the small proprietors the difference of rank is infinitely less, owing, among other causes, to the assistance which they receive from each other in their daily occupations."—*Koster*, p. 439, 440.

" Where but few slaves are owned, particularly in the *upper country*, they are treated almost as members of the family, fare nearly the same as the masters, both in work and food. These small planters work side by side with their slaves, in the cultivation of their fields, as do also the overseers on the middling-sized plantations. The climate of the Sea Islands will not

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\* A small proprietor in Brazil, is a man who possesses from two to ten slaves.

"permit the labour of the whites on the field."—  
*Extracted from answers received from America.*

In the Quarterly Review it is stated, that the prices of slaves are gradually diminishing in Cape Town, in consequence of the introduction of European labourers, and that "in no part of the "world are slaves treated so well, and worked so "easily, as at Cape Town."

In many places where slavery is on the decline, and in some where it is not, the slaves are allowed by their masters to work for whom they please, and at what rate of wages they choose, and to provide for themselves in their own way, paying only to him a stipulated weekly sum out of their wages. From this state of slavery, emancipation would occasion as little danger to individuals or the state, as the removal of a tax from free people.

By an account in the Christian Observer for December, entitled "Remarks on a Journey through North America," it will appear plain, that in the south, bordering on the Mississippi, the slaves work harder, and are treated worse than in the other States. The writer states, page 763, "You continually see the overseer stalking about "with his long lash whip, whilst the poor slaves are "toiling, with little rest or respite, from morning till "night; for here, I observe, they seem to work many "hours longer than in Carolina." And Wm. Tell Harris states, in his remarks during a tour through the United States of America, "The further I proceed

"south, the more obvious are the evils of slavery." That this is a generally acknowledged fact, may also be inferred from Birkbeck's travels, see *Negro Slavery*, page 32. "Virginia prides itself on the comparative mildness of its treatment of the slaves; and in fact, they increase in numbers, many being annually supplied from this state to those farther south, where the treatment is said to be much more severe." Now, it is perfectly well known, that in these southern parts slave-cultivation is most profitable.

We trust it will be clear, that a reduction in the prices of produce and the value of labour has ever preceded emancipation, and that in the progress towards it, the system has been mitigated; whilst, on the contrary, its evils have increased in proportion to its profits. If, however, there remained any doubts upon this subject, we shall be able to remove them by a comparative statement of the slave population of Jamaica and the United States at different periods:

In 1791, the number of slaves in Jamaica

is stated, by Bryan Edwards, but which he considered under-rated, at..... 250,000

In 1810, from calculations founded on the

reports of the Assembly of Jamaica, they must have been about..... 320,000

In 1817, they were, on what was stated

to be a more accurate data, called..... 345,252

At that time a small annual decrease was taking

place, but the numbers would not differ materially in 1820 from what they were in 1817; showing an increase of only 95,252 in twenty-nine years; though from 1787 to the abolition of the Slave-trade in 1808, there had been added, by importation into that island, 188,785;\* the commencement of that period is four years prior to 1791; yet this will probably be fully made up by the inaccuracy stated to be in the returns of that period.

Bryan Edwards states the value of the exports from Jamaica in 1787-8, at £2,136,442 17s 6d, being about £8 10s for every slave on the island. At this time it was a common subject of discussion, whether it was more advantageous to breed slaves, or to purchase and work them out; and shocking as it may be, the Jamaica planters seem to have adopted and acted upon the latter opinion, however erroneous it may have been; for buying slaves could never afford even temporary profit, except when the prices of produce were extravagantly high, and the permanent and enormous evils of the system will be rendered sufficiently obvious.

In the year 1790, the slave population of

the whole of the United States, was...	676,696
In the year 1800 it was.....	894,444
In the year 1810 .....	1,191,364
In the year 1820 .....	1,531,431

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\* See Review of Registry Laws, published by Hatchard, page 74.

The rate of increase being, for the first period of ten years,  $28\frac{1}{4}$  per cent, the second  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent, and the third  $28\frac{1}{2}$  per cent; the greater increase in the second period was owing to the partial importation from Africa, but this is more than counterbalanced by the manumission of about 100,000 slaves, which appears, on calculation, to have taken place in thirty years.

By Pitkins it appears, that the whole amount of the exports from Virginia, and all the States southward of it, was, in the year 1791, £1,539,209; and the number of slaves in those States in 1790, was 545,403; therefore the whole amount of all the exports was only about 56s for every slave; and it must also be remarked, that those States contained a large white population, whose labours must have produced something for exportation; this may have been counterbalanced by the shipments coastwise; but this is a subject on which great accuracy cannot be obtained; it is enough to show the great comparative difference in the value of the exports, and the different systems to which it has led; for with such an export from the United States, it could never have been a subject of calculation whether it was cheaper to breed or to purchase slaves, the whole export being only about the current rate of interest on the value of the slaves taken at £40 each; hence the poverty of the planters there compelled them to adopt the breeding system.

In 1791, Jamaica had a slave population of 250,000	
In 1820, ditto about.....	345,252
In 1790, the United States.....	676,696
In 1820, ditto .....	1,531,431

If the American system had been pursued in Jamaica, the population of that island ought to have been 565,775 in the year 1820. And yet, notwithstanding the addition of 188,785 by importation, we still find the slave population 220,523 short of what it ought to have been without any importation at all, and adding the numbers imported, makes altogether a difference of 402,308. After seeing the result of this comparison, who will be found to dispute the injurious effects of high prices, and the beneficial effects of low prices on the condition of slaves.

Though such calculations as these give the most incontestable proofs, yet in following them we are in danger of forgetting that the subjects of them are our brethren and fellow-heirs of immortality; and when we do bring our minds to the contemplation of the subject, the indescribable horrors of such a destruction, such a waste of human life, such a prevention of its increase by cruelties, make it difficult to believe that these things have occurred in our own times. But, truly, it is no relation of what has happened in distant times, and which the veil of obscurity might have rendered doubtful; it is not the act of ignorant barbarians, who, from a want of knowledge of their own interest, and in the absence of better feelings, had

continued a system no less of folly than of wickedness.—No, the whole of this has happened since the enormities of the system have been laid open to the British public. This disgrace, no less to our understandings than to our hearts; this destruction of human life, no less than of Colonial prosperity, is extensively going on at the present moment.

Such has been the fatal effects of this system on the population of Jamaica; let us now trace its effects on the commerce of the West Indies since the abolition of the Slave-trade in 1808.

The quantity of British plantation Sugar imported into Great Britain,

In 1808 was .....	174,000 tons.
In 1821 , , .....	189,000 ,
In 1822 , , .....	161,000 ,

The quantity of Cotton exported from the United States,

In 1807 was.....	64,000,000 lb.
In 1821 it was about.....	120,000,000 ,

and in the latter case, besides supplying a largely increased consumption at home.

Thus we see that, in the short period of fifteen years, the principal product of the United States has been doubled,\* whilst that of the West Indies

\* This does not wholly arise from the natural increase of the slave population in the Cotton district only, for a large proportion of the increase in the Tobacco and other less profitable cultivations, have been transferred to the Cotton.

has remained stationary. We find, too, that in the year 1791, the island of Jamaica exported 1,906,467lb of cotton; in that same year, the United States only exported 189,316 lb.

Our colonists have been undersold, and comparatively driven out of the market by the cotton of the Americans; and we conceive, after reading the preceding statements, it will not be asked why it is so. They now complain of being undersold by the planters of Cuba and the Brazils, and are unable to compete with them; though, by a bounty paid on the exportation of the surplus, the price at which all their sugar is sold, is about 6s per cwt. above its natural price, and above the price at which the planters of the Brazils and Cuba are selling theirs.

The importation of slaves into the Brazils and Cuba has continued, and we have not those regular censuses to enable us to judge of their natural increase, as in the United States; but the planters of the Brazils and Cuba reside on their estates, almost without exception; and after having shown the former low value of the exports from the United States, we need not add that this prevails there also. Non-residence of the proprietors, that fruitful source of expense, of waste, of cruelty, of vice and immorality, is almost peculiar to the British Colonies. In Cuba, the Brazils, and the United States, much greater attention is paid to the religious instruction of the slaves, and more time

afforded for it; that this, and a general improvement in morals must be the effect of the residence of the proprietors and their families, no one acquainted with the subject will deny. In the British Colonies emancipation is discouraged, and in some of the islands loaded with heavy penalties, whilst in the Brazils and Cuba emancipation is encouraged by the laws and by the dispositions of the people. Hence it is probable, that fully one-third of the black and coloured people are free; these, added to a very large number of whites, will make the free population probably double that of the slaves. In the defence of the country, and in the beneficial effects of so great a proportion of free labour in the cost of their exports, the advantages of such a system, over one which employs only slaves and an armed force to keep them in subjection, are too obvious to need much illustration.

There will no longer be any difficulty in deciding why our Colonists are undersold; but it may be proper to notice one of the reasons they assign. It is said these planters can cultivate cheaper, because they are allowed to import, and can therefore buy slaves at a low price. This cannot be urged with respect to the cotton of the United States; the low value of the *exports* from thence would not admit of the *importation* of slaves, and the planters were compelled to adopt the more economical system of breeding. The expense of bringing up young

slaves will of course vary according to the different value of their labour, the cost of maintenance, including the quantity of clothing the climate may require, &c. but wherever slaves can be held with profit to the owner, it proves, to a certain degree, a scarcity of labourers, and most of our information from the United States, and especially from the southern parts, would lead to the conclusion that they are a clear gain to the master before they arrive at the age of twenty-one. We need only look at the state of the population and commerce of the United States, and of our West India islands, and surely we shall hear no more of such folly, as the advantages of being allowed to buy slaves, to extend a losing business; after all their complaints, have our planters still money to spare, to squander so foolishly?

If our manufacturers found themselves undersold by any rival, would they seek for a bounty on an old and exploded system? or would they seek to discover and to adopt the improvements their rival had made? Unshackled by bounties, unaided by useless monopolies, and thriving with unrestrained freedom, on what a towering eminence stands the manufacturing skill and industry of Great Britain. Here she is superior to all her rivals, but how sadly the reverse stands her Colonial system. There, she shrinks from all competition! and why? Because she is sunk

beneath them all (excepting perhaps the Dutch) in oppression, immorality, debauchery, irreligion, and the expense and waste consequent upon them.

Before entering upon the consideration of those measures best calculated to promote the Abolition of Slavery, it may be proper to notice the strong desire which is felt by many warm friends to the cause, that we may "keep perfectly clear of all commercial considerations."

The Society has one object in view, "The Abolition of Slavery," and ought to pursue a direct course to that object, without deviating to the *right hand* or to the *left*. To go out on the one hand, because it would serve a particular branch of commerce, or to be driven from it on the other hand, from the fear of interfering with another, would both be deviations from its course, and derelictions of its duty.

One great object of our inquiries is to bring the light of past experience on the subject. If then we have seen no emancipation from slavery, without its being accompanied by a low price of labour, and if free labour is so much cheaper, that slave labour must fall in a free competition with it, is it not reasonable to suppose that these are the means appointed by the supreme Governor of the universe, for the extinction of slavery, where higher motives have failed to effect it?

We have only to clear away the obstacles which prevent the natural course of things, and

we may then rest satisfied of the result ; but it would be absurd to expect, by laws and regulations, to put down a system we are taxing ourselves to support. What has already been written on free labour, ought to remove all doubt, and ensure its adoption ; for after the great improvements in machinery, if any country had continued to prefer goods made in the old system by hand labour, it must be evident that they could not have obtained goods so made, unless they paid a higher price for them ; the manufacturers must be remunerated for that expensive system, or they would not continue it. If this be true, and I venture to say no man will deny the position, it must be equally true that it will not long be possible for the people of this country to obtain slave-cultivated sugar, without paying a higher price for it ; for unless the planters are remunerated for this expensive system, they will not continue it.

That it is practicable to substitute a system of reward for that of force and fear, and that with immediate advantage, is proved beyond all controversy, in Dr. Dickson's " Mitigation of Slavery," a short analysis of which, by Thomas Clarkson, will appear in the Inquirer.

If the planters of the Brazils, of Cuba, or the United States, found themselves undersold, would they apply for, or have any chance of obtaining if they did, a bounty on the export of their pro-

duce? or would they not inquire what improvements their rivals had made, and then endeavour to imitate or surpass them?

Our Colonial system would not have been in so bad a state as it now is, if it had not been receiving a support a good deal unknown to the country. It would not do openly to say, that when West India sugar comes into the country, it shall pay 27s per cwt. and when it is exported it shall receive 33s for drawback and bounty; *that* would have been too plain, and therefore the same thing is done by means of a bounty on the export of the surplus, when refined; and thus the price of all West India sugar is raised about 6s per cwt. which is an expense to the country of about £1,200,000 per annum for the support of the system of slavery.\*

If 6s per cwt. was thought enough to support our wretched Colonial system against the competition with other slave-systems in the sale of sugar on the continent of Europe, it was thought no adequate protection against the free cultivated sugar of the East Indies. This difference in duty has been attempted to be raised from 10s to 15s per cwt.

Had these unnatural supports not been given to the system, there can be no doubt its mitigation would, ere this, have commenced, by the

\* See J. Cropper's Letters to W. Wilberforce, p. 20.

competition of Brazil and Cuba sugar in the continental, and of East India sugar in the home market; and more especially as the planters would then have looked to themselves for an amelioration of their situation, in the improvements they could make, instead of looking to government for bounties and monopolies to protect them from the consequences of their own neglect, and the crimes and vices of their system. Many of the planters would remove with their families, to look after their own concerns, as their more successful rivals have always done.

That such would be the early effect of the removal of this unnatural support, will scarcely be doubted by any one, and its good effects on the morals and habits of the Colonists could be as little questioned. But the cruelty of forcing people from their native country will be urged against it; let the Planters never forget the state of their negroes, whom none but themselves can effectually protect or relieve. It is unreasonable for any to look for support from the public, without first doing their best to support themselves; and let those who hesitate to do their duty, transfer their properties to those who will. This object once accomplished, this great and peculiar evil of the British Colonial system will be removed.

Though slavery has its foundation in high prices; and though low prices of produce and

of labour as certainly produce gradual amelioration and ultimate emancipation; yet the change from a bad system to a better may be attended with temporary loss. But supposing that temporary losses should attend the change; when a case is made out, the country will cheerfully grant indemnity; for it may safely be estimated, that one-fourth part of the sum which is now given, to support and render perpetual a system of crime and oppression, would provide ample indemnity for any loss which could be sustained by its extinction.—The practicability of making the change with *immediate* advantage, is so clearly proved in Dr. Dickson's "Mitigation of Slavery," that it is scarcely possible to conceive that any loss could be sustained by the adoption of such a change. Another no less certain advantage of a change from slavery to freedom, *is an increased value of the land cultivated.* In the United States it is remarked, that land of a similar quality, and under similar circumstances, (slave cultivation alone excepted,) will not sell for half the price of land under the cultivation of free men; nay more, that inferior land, more distant from a market, in the State of Maryland, cultivated by free men, sells for more than double the price of better land near to a market, in the same State, but under the cultivation of slaves; and further, that the land alone, under free cultivation, would be

worth more than both land and slaves put together are now worth. The proprietor or mortgagee of West India property would find, in an increased value of the land, yielding a greater produce and nett income, a more valuable and permanent substitute for his uncertain tenure in the persons of his fellow-beings. Let us reflect what the island of Jamaica would now have been, with a population of 565,775 blacks, and especially when in the natural course of events they had become free: for free they would certainly have been, if no market like that of the Missouri had been opened for the sale of them. And in the adoption of a course, which must lead to such favourable results, what ground is there to fear that the planters would sustain any loss, or have to claim any indemnity? But when we speak of granting indemnity, the justice, the dignity of the country demands that it should be held out with equal hand to the poor and to the rich, and the tremendous claims for the moral degradation of 700,000 human beings, must never be forgotten.

There are some plausible notions, which it is necessary to meet and remove; amongst these is the assertion that the slave must suffer from the poverty of his master. Though it has been made clear beyond controversy, that low prices of produce gradually lead to mitigation and ultimate emancipation; and that on the other hand, the horrors of slavery are increased in proportion to

the profits it produces; but if a planter will, after the change of circumstances, continue to pursue plans which must produce his own ruin, the slaves of course would suffer with the master, until his property had passed into wiser hands; and that such would be the case we may rest satisfied, for no one would be a purchaser with the intention of pursuing a system which must lead to certain ruin.

It is again urged as an objection by some, that if we allow the sugar of the East Indies to come in without restriction or discriminating duty, we shall be giving encouragement to a system of oppression no better than that of the West Indies. It is true that slaves do exist in the *East Indies*; but that term comprehends a vast extent of country, under a great variety of circumstances; and in one of those districts on the western coast of Hindostan, where their existence is proved, they do not exceed two in the hundred of the whole population. In a densely peopled district, like that of Bengal, where wages are reduced to the lowest rate of subsistence, where can be the profit or the motive for holding men in slavery? No wonder, then, that many have spent great part of their lives in that district of India, without being aware of the existence of slavery; or that a gentleman of the highest respectability, who lived 20 years in the sugar district of Bengal, and employed to the extent of

2500 to 3000 people at once, should never have heard of a slave. So much for the slavery of Bengal.

To those who have never considered the difference between a freeman and a slave, it may appear absurd to speak of increased commerce benefiting one set of people, and injuring another; but when that distinction is considered, this difficulty will speedily vanish. Who ever heard of the labouring class in this country complaining of too much or too constant employment, though we have often heard of post-horses, who work like slaves under the lash, suffering from it. But for a full answer to this, we may say, look at the effects of high and low prices in the United States and Jamaica. Again, we should surely not refuse to trade with the East Indians, because they are poor, because they are ignorant, or because they are idolatrous; if, on consideration, we find that trading with them is the most likely means to remove their poverty, their ignorance, and their idolatry.

It is objected to our plans, that if emancipation is talked of, it may produce an insurrection amongst the slaves; and where, we would ask, is an insurrection dreaded, but in those very places where emancipation is not talked of, or even held up? Is not manumission constantly talked of, and constantly going on in the northern parts of the United States, and is there in them

any dread of insurrection ? What reason is there to dread either insurrection or foreign invasion in the Spanish or Portuguese colonies, where emancipation is constantly held out to the industrious, who are able to buy their freedom.

How is emancipation *ever to be brought about, unless it be talked of.* Yes, talked of, not only by individuals, but in the House of Commons, and canvassed by the people of England at large. This is for ever to hinder emancipation ; so every time we begin to talk of it, *our mouths are to be stopped.* How then is slavery to be abolished ? The planters foreboded insurrections, and so did their evidences, *when examined before the House of Commons,* if the abolition of the slave-trade were persevered in ; and yet no such effects were produced ; though the subject was 20 years under discussion.

To those friends of the African cause, who have so long and so nobly advocated the abolition of the slave-trade, and who hoped that its benefits would have produced great mitigation in the state of slavery, let us seriously appeal, whether it is not necessary that other measures should now be taken for the relief of our brethren, so long and so unjustly held in bondage. But let us also appeal to all those who in various ways are giving up their time and their money to increase the happiness and lessen the miseries of their species. Though in the ordering of an all-wise Creator,

one may be more fitted for one thing, and another for another; one may have strong feeling on this subject, and another on that; and these perhaps implanted by a Supreme Governor of an harmonious whole; yet whatever may be the peculiar objects of benevolent pursuit, if we see oppressions and crimes go on, which we have it in our power to prevent, are we not participators in them? And how much more do we participate, if we contribute (without remonstrance) to the support of a system from which they are inseparable. Is it not the duty of all who are endeavouring to promote the extension of knowledge and of virtue, to examine for themselves, our facts and our reasonings; and if they should be convinced that we are right, they will omit no opportunity of endeavouring to rid themselves and their country of the disgrace of contributing, for the support of a system of cruelty and oppression, debauchery, immorality, and irreligion, unexampled in the world, to a greater amount than it costs to support all the benevolent institutions of the country put together.

FINIS.